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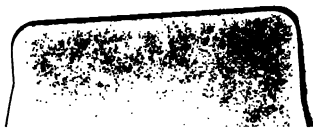


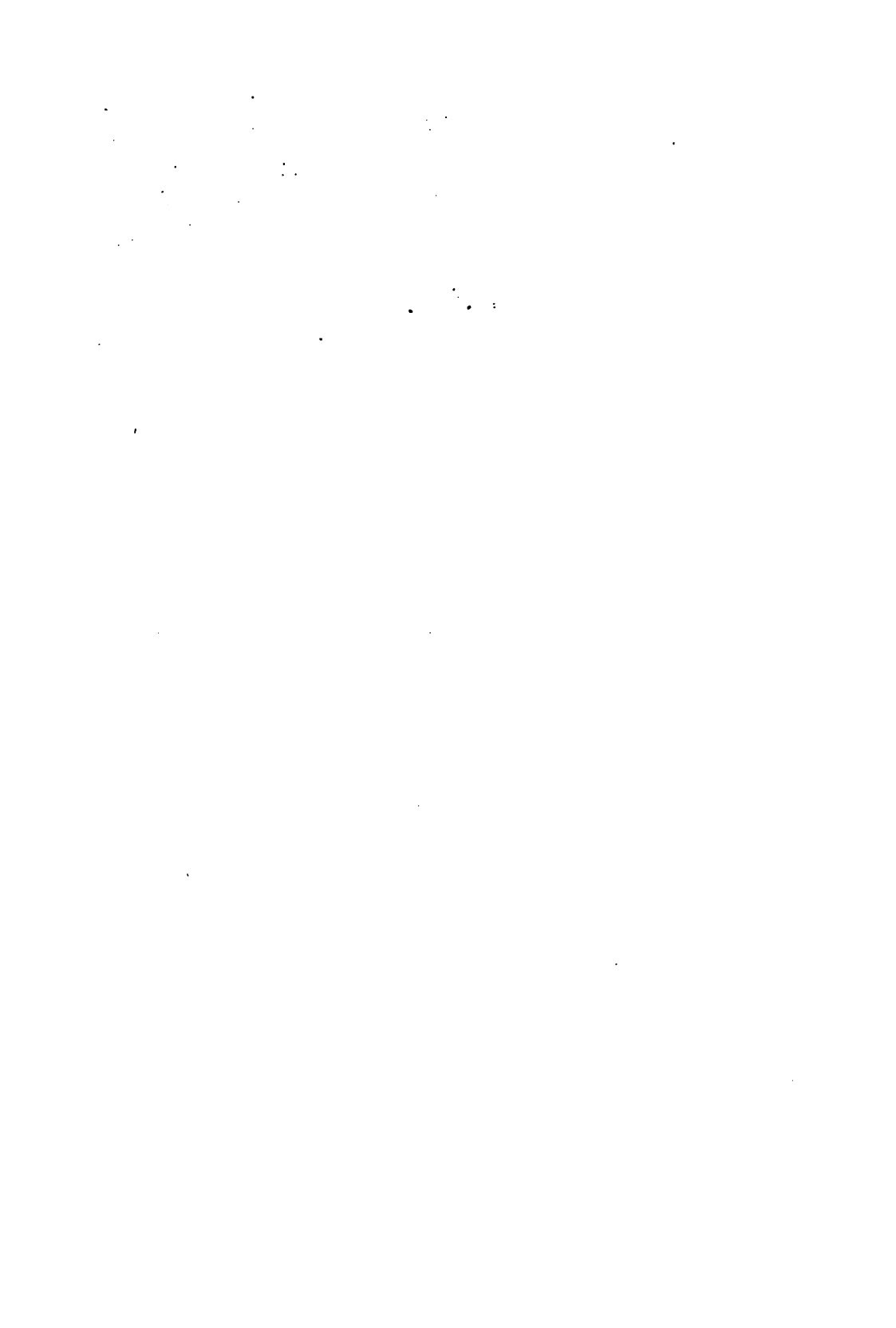


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THE LONE HUT;

OR,

A LEGEND OF MONT BLANC.

A Drama, in Two Acts.



AS REPRESENTED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, LYCEUM.

By GEORGE RAYMOND.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

TO BE HAD AT THE THEATRE.

1842.

1057.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Jerome (a substantial farmer) MR. F. MATTHEWS.
Lindorf MR. DIDDEAR.
Prophetic (a miscellaneous shopkeeper) MR. HABLEY.
Antoine (in love with Lisette) MR. F. BLAND.
Albert (a priest) MR. FREEBORN.
An Hungarian MR. O. SMITH.
Tracato MR. GREEN.
Brent (a smuggler) MR. WIGAN.
Martin MR. BURT.

Hortense MISS FAUCIT.
Lisette (daughter to Jerome) MISS CRISP.
Babet MISS MURRAY
Pauline MISS TAYLOR.

Soldiers, &c.

PERIOD, 1796.

THE LONE HUT;

OR,

A LEGEND OF MONT BLANC.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Outside of a Farm House—St. Martin, in the district of Faucigny. Breakfast table prepared upon the lawn. BABET comes from the house with eatables, &c.—arranges the table. ANTOINE sits thoughtfully apart. Distant hills—a bridge over a ravine.

Babet. Here's weather for our native scenery!—(looking out.) Hah! ha!—there—there he sits in council—Mont Blanc, the only monarch of the Swiss. But I protest 'tis past seven o'clock, and often has Master Jerome declared, he would as soon see the black Wizard himself enter his doors as a sluggard. What, Antoine! wilt thou never again hold up that addle head of thine?

Antoine. Banter me as you will, Babet, I am a fine subject for your merriment, and almost confess I deserve it. Since I have lost every hope of exciting an interest in the bosom of Lisette, I am quite indifferent to the usage of the rest of the world.

Babet. Why—yes, Antoine—I believe she should disturb the repose of a vast variety amongst ye, if 'twasn't that this busy season sent them all to bed too tired to think of anything but forgetting themselves. But come—be a man. Love is the daughter of idleness, you have heard.

Antoine. Ay, Babet—and the mother of disquiet, I truly know—(*rises, and looks towards the table*)—but, see!—some one has been already regaling. Can Mademoiselle Lisette—

Babet. Mademoiselle Lisette! No—no—Hortense, no doubt, as usual, setting us another good example in early rising. Now, *there's* a young lady for you! Why, she has a head worthy the shoulders of an archbishop.

Antoine. Lisette's cousin—on a visit here at the farm, and recently arrived from her native city, Lausanne. True, Babet, she is indeed well skilled and intelligent, but—

Babet. But, what eloquence can speak like the silent glance of your blue-eyed maid?—Intelligent! aye, aye, and good as intelligent! Hortense; for though not three days from Lausanne, yet there isn't a cottage amongst our mountains she has not visited, nor an indigent family she has not relieved. Then, she has such a powerful brain too—why, she can tell more about this country of ours, than many of our own villagers, who have been born and bred amongst us.

Antoine. (*Disregarding her, and half aside.*) Yes—I am resolved—if I do fail in securing the affections of Lisette, I will quit St. Martin, and unite myself to the fortunes of the daring Brent.

Babet. Indeed! will you?—A pretty pretext for turning smuggler. Or, in love, peradventure, a dabbler in the contraband of *that* commodity too, and having no longer a license in an honest maiden's regard, embark on the chance of *bonne fortune* in some truant wife!

Prophetic. (*Without*) Ah! hah!—good day! good day! neighbours and sweethearts—all of you! Foresaw we should meet when I 'spied ye coming—Ah! hah!

Babet. Hither hasten one, now, who has as little wit as thyself; but *his* madness is fortunately anything but the melancholy.

Antoine. That noisy Prophetic—a fellow who has so much foresight, that he never sees anything at his feet, and so tumbles over his nose.

Prophetic. (*Enters*) Ah! Babet! Babet! most unquestionably, good morrow!—Eh? Don Dolorous Antoine, I salute thee solemnly.

Antoine. Pshaw!

Prophetic. Now, that's what some people would call a tender passion. Tender! why he's as sore as a whitlow. Poor bankrupt wretch! Heart, temper, wits, and appetite—there's a *deficit* for you! What a declaration of moral and physical insolvency!

Babet. Ha! ha! ha!

Prophetic. Come, give me your hand, poor brainsick. D'ye hear now, I foresaw what a brilliant day this would be, when I peeped through the shutters this morning, and beheld the sun rise into a cloudless sky.—(*ANTOINE throws himself into a chair.*)

Babet. Why, you have a wonderful power of prevision; yet facts are not unfrequently with you, like our native storms, Mr. Prophetic; and the lightning of events outstrips the thunder of your reports. *2.*

Prophetic. Ha! hah!—poetry and pudding! Just upon my rounds too, to all my good customers. Opened the old shop in a new style—painted in and out for the season, (*archly to BABET.*) Paint, paint, Babet, deals marvellously in anachronisms—a very plague of dates, and confuses a whole generation in a single tint of vermilion. Goods and invoices from all quarters of the globe.

Babet. Beginning, I suppose, with the first fashion from Paris.

Prophetic. Aye, Babet, and down to the last from London. I, Prophetic, the great Helvetic monopolist—general dealer in all kinds of natural or artificial produce; from a Persian brocade to a Spanish anchovy. Importer of white camel skins from Mecca, and tallow or pitch from the capital of Sweden. Publisher of gazettes extraordinary—the last likeness of the French consul, and author of the Italian quatrain on his mightiness, the Archduke of Germany.

Babet. Ha! ha!—What, are you in that way too?

Prophetic. In *that* way! why, I'm in everybody's way. Published a fresh guide to the glaciers too, so that if you lose yourself, you may know where you are. Teeth drawn, and ladies attended. Jobbing in all its branches.

Babet. No wonder, Mr. Prophetic, you have so little

time for making yourself agreeable at the farm. 'Tis nearly four days since you've looked in, and we've been out of girkins and capsicums, since Thursday last.

Prophetic. Girkins and capsicums! Where's my order book?—(*writes memorandum.*)

Babet. But you don't mind how short we run. Why, we're out of everything.

Prophetic. Except that temper, Babet—that sweet temper, which has preserved you young and handsome, *despite* the treachery of youth and beauty. But where is father Jerome and Mademoiselle Hortense, and —?

Babet. Why, as to Hortense, she has been tasting the fresh air of our native hills, for these two hours at least.

Prophetic. The saints! Well, if that's been her only taste since sun-rise, I foresee she'll be a bit peckish before dinner-time. But, hark ye! she's a monstrous genius. Called yesterday at the "Sun Dial"—bought nothing to be sure—though marvellously caught by my new beetle-trap. But then she spoke so kindly, I verily never could have found it in my heart to treat her as a customer. But here comes Jerome, and his dulcet daughter.

(*Enter JEROME and LISETTE from the house—ANTOINE rises to meet them.*)

Jerome. Come! come! Lisette! Your cousin, Hortense, has been stirring some hours, I warrant. Antoine, my lad, here's a golden morning for us!—Ah! Mr. Prophetic, your most obedient. What news abroad?

(*During this, ANTOINE presents LISETTE with refreshment, which she reluctantly accepts—BABET playfully urging him towards her.*)

Prophetic. Not a word—not a breath, Mr. Jerome—but I foresee, if the belligerent powers still carry on the war, much blood may yet be spilt. Only looked in to see if the last supply of molasses was at an end, and to set all your little Genevas by the "Sun Dial." I've now to run to the fish market—fix fifteen leeches on the contractor's gouty toe—teach a spoilt child his multiplication table, and shoe his pet mule, before I call three minutes my own—(*going.*) By the bye—don't you send to the "Cardinal's Hat" for your *vin de grave*—young Verdigris is more indebted for patients to old Alcohol's customers, than to any extraordinary blight in the season, I witness ye.

Jerome. Well! well.

Prophetic. So, forgive me, good Mr. Jerome. Can't stay—full of business, till the renewal of the war. A blue-bottle in a mustard pot's in Paradise to me—all points of the compass and one moment of time—but remember, I foresaw it all.—(*Exit.*) (*Returns confidentially*)—you can't recommend one to a customer for a little damaged cochineal?—three dozen pickle jars—take 'em all away at his own price.—Well—well.—(*Exit.*)

Babet. (*Impatiently looking after him.*) All points of the compass indeed!—I protest there was somewhat of the north-easter in his cutting departure.—(*Bounces into of the house.*)

Lisette. (*To ANTOINE, who has been waiting on her.*) Thanks, thanks—good, excellent, Antoine! Nay, think me not ungrateful, though I do not..... I cannot requite you as I ought.

Antoine. Beloved, even in thy rebuke. Gentle Lisette, my affection, which has moved your pity, shall not provoke your scorn. Lisette, I leave you....perhaps....for ever—my heart must burst in secret. Farewell—farewell. Good Mr. Jerome...farewell. (*exit.*)

Jerome. Stay, stay, Antoine!—come back. That boy is sadly altered of late, Lisette; and although I cannot boast the foresight of *some* people, yet I have my suspicions. You do not give that youth the encouragement he deserves.

Lisette. Sir!

Jerome. Aye—now you are all surprise—surprised that your dull father should at last have discovered that which has been apparent to the whole village this twelvemonth. Antoine, I say, is a good lad, and —

Lisette. — No, dearest father,—I have no disguise. I admire, I esteem Mr. Antoine; but to know that he loves me gives me the deepest pain.

Jerome. How so?—You are a strange puzzle.—How so?

Lisette. Because, Sir, I have not a heart to offer in return.

Jerome. Aye? aye?—What have I then to learn? Explain, my child.

Lisette. Explain, Sir?

Jerome. Yes, Lisette.—Does not something remain to be explained?—

Lisette. Perhaps.... *ss*.... I would, yet cannot speak.

Jerome. Why this reserve—at least with me, Lisette; as though you deemed disquiet were a fault?—

Lisette. Then, Sir....dearest father, you may have heard....perhaps, know....yes, yes, you are acquainted with....him.

Jerome. Him!—

Lisette. Mr. Lindorf.

Jerome. Is it so, Lindorf loves my child?

Lisette. And heaven grant, with the same sincerity that I return his vows.

Jerome. Forgive me, Lisette, but this somewhat moves me....nay, nay, I am not angry, child....You tell me, Lisette, that *he* loves you?—

Lisette. He has indeed taught me to believe so.

Jerome. Lindorf is far above you in rank, as 'tis reported—far more in estate.—Disproportioned matches are not always....are seldom, happy. I must own, my child, had your affections been gained by some one amongst your equals, I had been more at ease—at least, more confident of your peace, Lisette.

Lisette. But does not his superiority in these points prove the disinterestedness of his affection?

Jerome. Aye—*now* you will talk, I vouch, and advocate the cause with amazing volubility. I must confess to you, Lisette, I know no positive objection to Lindorf as your husband, though I might have been inclined to urge something in favour of poor Antoine.

AIR.

Lisette. Ah! tell me, tell me, is it just
To meet his fondness with mistrust,
Or recompense with pride?
She loves but coldly; and her heart
Is given only but in part,
Who cannot all confide.

He won me not with words alone,
Or wooed me in a lover's tone,
Which lips can well employ.
But scathed my sorrows as they rose,
And turned my troubles to repose,
And ev'ry thought to joy.

bet. (re-enters) Oh! Master Jerome, the lads and
f the village are raising such a tarratant!—much
ut little work, I warrant—getting up a bit of

rondeau in honour of your niece, Hortense's arrival, and have been laying out their money with perilous prodigality at Mr. Pophetic's shop.

Jerome. Yes—he's the luckiest fellow for an honest man, I ever noted. But where can the queen of our ceremonies loiter—where stays Hortense?

Babet. She will be with us, anon. I espied her half an hour since descending the heights with the good Albert, laden with the choicest of our native flowers. But see, Jerome—a stranger passes the fence—some foreigner of distinction—swallows of our season, and the very first I have seen this year.

Lisette. (half aside) 'Tis surely Lindorf.

Jerome. The visit bespeaks a manliness of purpose which wins me from mistrust. Hie thee, within.

(*LINDORF appears behind with MARTIN; LISETTE kisses her hand to him, as she goes into the house. BABET follows.*)

Lindorf. Look! gaze on her, Martin.—Fair she is, yet whence such courtly beauty? In lowliness engendered, wild shoots of grace will delicately blossom, yet how this majesty of loveliness found not even in our cities?—Within an hour expect me. (*Exit MARTIN.*) Jerome de Clotaire, good morrow!

Jerome. Welcome, Sir.—You do honour to our humble house.

Lindorf. Lindorf confers no honour, worthy Jerome, that is not overpaid by so frank a welcome. Your estate lies charmingly.

Jerome. With care and industry, this little farm is become what you see it. Here my affections have been fixed, 'tis since, some twenty years; and my fidelity is now amply recompensed by the flourishing condition of all around me. Come—let me be bold, and say, I know the purpose of this visit.—Lisette has confessed to me how much you love her.

Lindorf. Not so, Jerome—these lips to *her* could scarce have breathed *how much*!

Jerome. The maiden city of a peasant's mind offers no triumph better than a fond allegiance.

Lindorf. And that, the sweetest; while we triumph but to cherish!

Jerome. 'Tis said, Sir, you are both rich and in the line of preferment. Lisette's estate you have already learnt!

Lindorf. And for the rest, I raise her to my condition, not sink to her's.

Jerome. I have ever deemed, Sir, an honest and unspotted life so true a nobility, that no alliance could give it brighter splendour; and a sincere couple, like the meeting of two currents, become of one quality, indistinguishable and inseparable.

Lindorf. (aside.) A rigid lesson and a sturdy teacher! *(To him.)* Your principle, though somewhat rough, is still honest. There is my hand—of gentle blood, Jerome, and shall become ennobled after your own good teaching. Are we safe from interruption, or does some holiday abroad—

Jerome. True, Mr. Lindorf, we will speak further, anon—for our neighbours approach to offer their congratulations to my niece. We shall be honoured, Sir, by your witnessing their revelry.

Lindorf. And I, more than content, good Jerome.

(Enter PROPHETIC and a troop of villagers. As they approach, LISETTE comes from the house with BABET, and joins LINDORF behind, at the table. ANTOINE, who has also entered, observes LINDORF and LISETTE, apart.)

Prophetic. Now, gently—gently! you coquettes—for if there's too much bustle, I foresee there may be no little confusion. Ha! hah! Mr. Jerome, I give you joy! yes, Sir, I do give you joy; for when I hear there is a courtship going on, I foresee there'll be a wedding.

Jerome. A wedding, Mr. Prophetic?

Antoine. (aside.) A wedding, indeed!

Babet. Yes; and when a wedding takes place, any fool may foresee the consequences.

Prophetic. Softly! softly! That fillet wasn't bought at the "Sun Dial"—never sold so unbecoming a colour in my life—got it at the old tumble-down shop, "The one-eyed friar of Savoy."

Babet. Pooh!

Antoine. (aside.) For this bitter confirmation have I yet lingered another hour. Doubt, at least, has left me; and now, courage, my heart, to all that follows. *(exit.)*

Jerome. Antoine!

Prophetic. Antoine! fond, fanciful Antoine! Ah! I foresaw but, what a simpleton to leave such a pretty choice of evils *(pointing to the damsels around)*; so many spring-blossom faces, too; each of which would

willingly give one eye to captivate him with the other—quite a preserve of beauty ! But I'll be after him ; I must be after him ; for when he's no longer amongst us, I foresee there may be one less at supper-time.

(*Exit running, BABET looking after him.*)

Jerome. See, the fair object of our joy approaches !

(*Music ; HORTENSE and ALBERT are seen passing over the bridge, bearing flowers, &c. ; they salute the party on the stage, and move off on the other side. Dance and following chorus*)

With native fervour, gentle maid,
Helvetia welcomes thee !
Amidst whose snows, are bosoms warm
With love and liberty !

The terrors of the Avalanche,
The dread tornado's rage,
No more alarm, whilst vernal joys
Our social hearts engage.

(*LINDORF and LISETTE remain engaged at a distance, without noticing what passes. During the second stanza HORTENSE comes on the stage with ALBERT ; Dancers approach to welcome her, &c. &c.*

Hortense. My dear uncle, good morrow ! (*To the troop.*) This courtesy, my friends, is due only to merit, which puts mine sadly to the blush. Receive these flowers, and in your affectionate bosoms they will not droop, though rude the hand which plucked them.

Jerome. Welcome, Hortense—indeed, doubly welcome ! We have now a two-fold object in our *jour de fête* ; your cousin, Lisette, has made a full disclosure (*archly*).

Hortense. A disclosure ! You then, Sir, are the only confessor she acknowledges ; and remember, women sometimes consider their little secrets, like your wine, the better for keeping.

Lindorf. (*apart to LISETTE.*) See ! Lisette, the dancers are crowding to the lawn. Come ! let us mingle in the throng.

(*LINDORF and LISETTE go off with dancers, &c., JEROME preparing to follow.*)

Hortense. (*agitated.*) Holy mother ! whom—what do I behold ?

Jerome. Come, Hortense, we will join our blithe companions.

Hortense. Forgive me, Sir; I feel a sudden dizziness . . . my long mountain ramble. . . pray leave me. . . but a little. . .

Jerome. Leave you! at such a moment, child! nay, nay; I haven't introduced you to our new guest. You shall give me your opinion of him.

Babet. Yes, do give us your opinion of him, Mademoiselle Hortense. We've put him to the vote in our diet, here; and he has carried his election by very acclamation—hasn't he, ladies?

Hortense. But an instant, Sir, and I will join you. Go, go, good uncle Jerome; leave the confessor only with me.

Jerome. Pray attend her, then, good Albert. Yet be not strangers to us long—no, no! have a care, now. Come, Babet. (*Exit with BABET.*)

Hortense. Is the gate closed; and have they left us all?
Albert. All! Speak out thy troubled thought.

Hortense. Troubled! 'tis riven, Albert, riven by that icy bolt—remembrance of the past. Hast at any time heard whisper of one Pyronne?

Albert. I do not remember.

Hortense. Listen. By birth a Piedmontese. His father dying, the baron D'Orville procured him a military commission. By his interest, moreover, sought to procure for him, at his own death, the reversion of a post of distinction, he then enjoyed. Yet neither affection nor advancement could attach a heart so deeply vicious as Pyronne's. By chance or otherwise, they journeyed together to Lausanne. Pyronne became enamoured of a lady of that city. In counterfeit adroit, for a season he acquired favour, till the city rang with his excesses. She heard his suit, but with abhorrence heard it.

Albert. And she, . . . ?

Hortense. . . . is here before you! It was about this time the baron withdrew, during a cessation of hostilities to St. Ange, his chateau at Languedoc. Pyronne, moody at his dismissal, accompanied him thither, and at the close of this year D'Orville died—suddenly expired, Albert. (*Emphatically.*)

Albert. Yes, lady. I now remember well. And it was even rumoured that, . . .

Hortense. Horrible! it was so. Pyronne had a sister,

Miriam, and she, spotless as light, for the first day beam of the new-made world was not more strange to guile. Of D'Orville thou hast something heard—truth, though in whispers, not less true. Pyronne was guilty of that old man's blood! Pyronne, Pyronne, I say, intolerant of one who having first directed him the road to fortune, brooded on guilty freedom and advancement. Nature shook to her centre on that night! The baron had been at rest some hours, when Pyronne sought his chamber. In repose the household, all—save one—one only witness—Miriam. Chance, or some diviner aid, led her to the corridor. A phantasy (for so she deemed it then) held her there motionless. Murmurs broke upon the stillness—not loud, but horrible their cadence—and a form—'twas her brother—hurrying from that chamber, in truth, more terrible than spectral shape, stood in her gaze. “Before the eye of God I shrank not, Miriam.....” were his imperfect words—and with an arm steeped in yet deadlier guilt than the first murderer's was, he would have smote his passage onwards—blighted it dropp'd, and his reeling form fell like a rock!

Albert. Soh!

Hortense. D'Orville was honorably interred, and Pyronne abroad in all the livery of woe. Again he sought me—again advanced his hateful suit. Miriam beheld it tremblingly—crept to my heart, and placed this festering secret in my keeping. Pyronne still sought me, and I spoke aloud!

Albert. How did he meet that fearful charge?

Hortense. As guilt would meet it. Lausanne he fled—his home—connexions—interests abandoned.

Albert. Under what name then did he pass?

Hortense. Lindorf.

Albert. And his sister?

Hortense. Was nobly wed—still lives in honor—no word of mine shall wound it.

Albert. Most cruel strait! He must not be proclaimed.

Hortense. Never! for Miriam's sake I've sworn it. Pyronne is yet ignorant of my vow, and Pyronne fears me, therefore. I will seek him, Albert—for Lisette must be—shall be rescued. Yes—I will seek him, and with such terrors, too, as shall avail this purpose.

Albert. The church can yet absolve thee, if thou wilt.

Hortense. I will not be absolved. Hark!—our friends! they are returning. How loud that shout of merriment! Let us hasten to join them—then, speak apart. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

(*A Room in LINDORF's house. LINDORF and MARTIN.*)

Martin. But why marry the girl?

Lindorf. Do not distract me—I can possess her no other way with security. To tear by violence, or ensnare by treachery the daughter of a man like this Jerome, from this hamlet, too, which half adores him, were folly indeed but ill advised. Should I grow tired of the girl, the arms of a fond parent will be ever thrown open to an unhappy child.

(*Enter HORTENSE cautiously—veiled*)

Hortense. (*aside*) I have escaped them unperceived—'tis he! 'tis.....but to my task.

Lindorf. A stranger? Martin—a woman! veiled too?

Martin. Approach! what means this concealment? whom is't you seek?

Hortense (*crossing to LINDORF*) Can we be alone, Pyronne?

Lindorf. What vision's this? Leave us, Martin—leave us together. (*exit MARTIN*) Now, mysterious visitor—let me know all.

Hortense. (*throwing aside her veil*) Such is my purpose—yet, first, Pyronne, look on me.

Lindorf. Amazement! Hortense!

Hortense. Nay—wherefore tremble? and why shrink you at the face you lately vowed so lovely? Is it not joy, Pyronne, that I, Hortense, who once beheld you at my feet, should now become *your* suitor?

Lindorf. Proceed—what is't you ask?

Hortense. 'Tis whispered that—*Lindorf* is about to wed a maiden of St. Martin.

Lindorf. Well? Stand I not here to hear thee?

Hortense. The innocent you seek to hold at that bosom, is dear to me—dear by her virtues and the ties of blood. Pyronne—hitherto I have neither sought nor followed thee, yet here I swear, if from this hour you further urge your purpose, this tongue shall denounce you in all your guilt—this arm shall raise the fearful sword of justice.

Lindorf. Demon!

Hortense. Now, even now, I might fly to the doating father, and exclaim your daughter weds a murd. . . but no—I will not. *You* I seek not to destroy; but *her*, with that heaven's aid, I will preserve—

Lindorf. You do—you have destroyed me. *Hortense* lives! Henceforward, not an eye but questions me—nay, not a slave I meet but—

Hortense. — Not so. Craven as thou art, not so. Till you transgress, these lips are sealed for ever.

Lindorf. Swear then to that—

Hortense. Wherefore? *Pyronne.* You know me.

Lindorf. True—true—but swear! Give me the pledge I ask.—Grant me that bond and let us part in hate!

Hortense. Aye!—and wider than that hate is deep, so let your lives be sundered—hers and yours!—I'll keep thy counsel. Look how you become your own betrayer.

Lindorf. Soh! But what is left me? What have I sought! what covenanted in base fear!—Renounce *Lisette*—renounce her at the threat, the malice of an unattested tale. I do not—will not consent.

Hortense. I am content—much more content, for I shall now act justly. I desire no more—farewell (*going*).

Lindorf. But a moment longer. Stay! (*detaining her.*)
(*Enter MARTIN.*)

Martin. Hist! Sir—hist! *Jerome de Clotaire*—he will not be denied, and —

Lindorf. (*With agitation*) *Jerome!*

Hortense. (*confused*) My kinsman!

Lindorf. (*aside*) *Jerome!* May she not still betray me, being seen—seen at this moment? (*To her.*) 'Tis *Jerome* who approaches. He must not notice thee at such a juncture, for *thy* sake and honour.—Yet remember, thou art sworn.

Hortense. Thus far too, in thy power (*aside*).

Lindorf. He comes. This door leads to another apartment, through which is ready egress to the street.

Hortense. (*shuddering*) Hah! is it come to this? Hear me, *Pyronne*—

Lindorf. Hear me, *Hortense.* Before the face of heaven have you declared, not to betray me on certain conditions.

Hortense. Thou art safe.

Lindorf. (*opens the door.*) Within, then. *Lisette* shall be restored—within, within (*HORTENSE goes in*), and venom

sting thee to the deep content of heart as merciless as mine! Jerome! (*turning affectionately to him as he enters.*)

Jerome. Mr. Lindorf, I have again considered this weighty question; and, in the fond hope of a parent, will cherish no other thought but happiness. Yet remember, while you wed the daughter of an humble man, you take a treasure as dear to him, as though he gave a diadem with her hand.

Lindorf. What, Jerome. Still, still suspicion, which should rather weaken with the hour that swells our intimacy. Once more, I love Lisette, and——

Jerome. —— will marry her?

Lindorf. (*looking fearfully at the door, through which HORTENSE went out.*) —— and will marry her.

Jerome. Eh! Lindorf—Is this gem less valued because so easily possessed? Her beauty, innocence, are they less accounted, because——

Lindorf. No, Jerome. I love your child—in the full tide of fondness, love her—my hand, my heart are her's (*half aside.*)

Prophetic. (*without*) Aye, but I must—I will. Why, his holiness himself couldn't have foreseen half this indifference.

Jerome. Heyday! the master of our revels.

(*Enter PROPHETIC.*)

Prophetic. Ah! what an amiable tête-à-tête! But without offence, the roses will lose their freshness; and I foresee too, the young ladies, their patience, if Mr. Jerome and his noble son-in-law that is to be, are absent from their merriment five minutes longer. Dancers and expectation, both on tiptoe—left sixteen of them in the very gyration of a French pirouette, with special orders to keep upon the whirl till we came back again.

Lindorf. Peace, jackalant! (*mildly*). Yes, yes, we'll come, blithe Mr. Prophetic. We'll join you.

Prophetic. St. Christopher, what a frigid look! no bad companion for the dog days. Well, preserve me from *la belle passion* and let me keep my temper. (*Pause. JEROME notices LINDORF earnestly; PROPHETIC observing both.*) There stands the young bridegroom now, who looks as if he had been married at least a twelvemonth, and quite satisfied; here, good old Mr. Jerome, who looks as though

he had never been married at all, and altogether disappointed. Then there's Mademoiselle Hortense, too! So you must be laying *three* heads together, and I not foresee it! Met her but now, gliding from the side door of this very house, as grave as a martyr.

Lindorf. How! babbler! how?

Jerome. (*aside—also with agitation.*) Hortense! Hortense! here?—in *this* house? His strange manner, too! Alas! my child, my poor Lisette!

Prophetic. "We've been waiting this half-hour, Mademoiselle Hortense," quoth I. The devil a word quoth she, but looked.aye, almost as spiteful as either of you; and that I defy *any* one to have foreseen.

Lindorf. Wither thee! (*mildly.*) You forget yourself.

Prophetic. Forget myself! Now by the herald, slander, rather think too much of myself, Mr. Lindorf; and by St. Dunstan with his tongs, there's not a maiden amongst us but's consuming with more than Ætna's fire; nor a Corydon in the whole village, but—Eh? (*Observes JEROME who takes up the veil left by HORTENSE.*) Why Master Jerome—good Master Jerome?

Jerome. What's this?—a veil? 'Tis Hortense! Oh! I am disturbed. This is no moment for formalities; let me be wakeful—watchful—(*Exit with the veil.*)

Lindorf. Hah!

Prophetic. Now, by the sadness of La Trappe—

Lindorf. (*laying hold on him.*) Peace! lest like a cur—

Prophetic. — you kick me! Well, that's one way of gaining a *footing* in a house. Kick! Now, there's an old adage, that he who foresees kicking had better take to his heels—foot for foot. (*Exit, running.*)

(MARTIN enters hastily.)

Martin. Jerome in strange confusion has just quitted the house. What is the purpose?

Lindorf. That I am baffled—baffled, Martin, but not destroyed. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.

As the First.—Chorus of Villagers.

Lads, lasses we summon—your voices invite,
That the good be happy—their fortunes bright!
Be nimble your feet—be in garlands arrayed—
Yet lighter your hearts,
As the sun imparts
His fervent kiss to the blushing maid!

(Enter PROPHETIC.)

Prophetic. Bravo! bravo! Sha'n't have such another merrymaking before the christening! *(To one of the girls.)* Soho! Pauline, what you here and without bandy Buckram, the tailor? Well, I declare I foresee an opportunity which shan't be missed. *(kisses her.)*

Pauline. Mr. Prophetic! Mr. Prophetic! you would provoke a saint.

Prophetic. Which relieves me from any apprehension of becoming formidable to *you*, my crab blossom. What, and our Mantuan Livia too! *(kissing another)* Constancy in friendship and variety in love, you know. But where is Father Jerome, and Mr. Lindorf, and Mademoiselle Hortense, and ———?

(LISETTE re-enters from the house.)

Lisette. Welcome, my kind friends!

Prophetic. Ah! Mademoiselle, I fancy we must give you joy of the Captain, though he is but a melancholy lover—but that's an evidence perhaps that his intentions are serious.

Lisette. Indeed! Mr. Prophetic—you are a nice observer.

Prophetic. Why—I'm a nice man altogether, and will Madame Lindorf, now and then, bestow a condescending recollection to the "Sun Dial?" Housekeeping, in all its branches,—saud, honey, mops, spices, Jack-chains, tooth-picks, and garden rollers.—List of prices. *(Presents a list.)*

Lisette. Good Mr. Prophetic, I'll not forget you; you may trust me.

Prophetic. Beg pardon, Mademoiselle, but I've left off the trust, some time. You'll not be offended, but running up bills and running off customers nearly brought me to a stand. Don't mind how little's the profit so as 'tis certain. But I must be off again. His mightiness not here!—

Love is strangely symptomatic in these parts—another example of the tender passion—about as gentle as a hyæna in one of my pepper tubs. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter JEROME—disturbed.*)

Jerome. (*apart*) Hortense, veiled! Hortense, disguised! and in the house of Lindorf!

Lisette. My father!—

Jerome. (*still abstractedly*) I remember, too, she appeared agitated when she first beheld him at the farm. Whence all this mystery?

Lisette. My father, something there is distresses you. What, what is it? Our friends are assembled to give us joy.

Jerome. To give us joy!—On what, Lisette?

Lisette. Oh! tell me, Sir, what labours in your bosom?

Jerome. Go, go! Lisette—let your *mirth* proceed.

Lisette. Never!—indeed, never! I see something has disturbed—cruelly disturbed you. What, what is it? Break up this festivity—defer, dissolve this projected union, anything to restore peace to my good, my affectionate parent.

Jerome. My child! my child! (*Embracing her.*)

(*Enter HORTENSE, with ALBERT.*)

Hortense. My friends!—tears! wherefore these? Speak, speak to me, Lisette.

Jerome. Our neighbours say, Hortense, they are come to give us joy. On what? what joy is here? See, see, Hortense, the man who so lately won the love of this young maid, is not here to fulfil his vow.

Hortense. His sorrow will break *my* heart too (*aside*). Compose, my dearest sir—compose that agonised brow, and if aught should have happened to prevent—

Jerome. — Prevent! why should aught happen to prevent? or why, Hortense, should *you* start so fearful a surmise? You were our pride, our solace—yet—oh! my brain's on fire! How, now?

(*Enter Servant with a letter*)

Hortense. Lisette! poor Lisette!

Servant. A messenger, but now And desired this letter be immediately delivered—

Jerome. —To me?

Servant. To Mademoiselle Lisette.

Lisette. (*taking it*) 'Tis Lindorf's hand. Father! Hortense! What can this mean?

(*Reads and faints into the arms of those about her.*)

Jerome. Give me the letter. (*Reads.*) "Sudden and inexplicable difficulties have surrounded me. From this abode of joy I am torn for ever—Lisette can never be mine. By the time you will have read this, Lindorf will be lost, indeed."

Hortense. (*with energy*) Thank God!—thank God!

Lisette. Oh! my father. Yes, he is wretched—but 'tis I indeed am lost. What secret enemy can have done this?

Jerome. (*with earnestness to HORTENSE*) Look on this child—gaze on her innocent, her lovely form. Tomorrow's sun was to have set a crown of happiness on this humble dwelling—to have blessed the drooping years of a fond parent, and have given his only child to the protection of a husband—when, suddenly, a fiend—

Hortense. (*clasp ing her forehead*) A fiend! Oh!

Jerome. Whose was the bosom to cherish this ingratitude? Whose was the mortal heart to conceive this more than human sin? Speak! can *you* tell, Hortense?

Hortense. Sin! Ingratitude! Ah! do I hear him say it?—Roll back thou little hour! the short, short, past revoke!—Ingratitude! No! so prove me, heaven!

Jerome. Nay—stand apart. Answer me, Hortense. Did you ever see Lindorf before this morning?

Hortense. Lindorf! Py——! nay! do not, do not!

Jerome. My brain will burst. I have yet a word further. Did he ever speak to you of love?

Hortense. (*choking*) Lend me thy counsel, stars! I cannot—cannot speak; yet oh! great justice, wherefore?

Jerome. Behold! Know you this veil?

Hortense. (*distractedly*) Ah! disclaim, denounce me if you must; follow me with your hate, I must endure it all. Mine was the hand, the heart! under heaven's dread sentence both, for both are surely mad!

(*She fall at the feet of LISETTE, as she is taken into the house.*)

Jerome. Stay, stay, my child, and witness to—

Hortense. —Your curse! Hold! what have I said? Nay, do not curse me, or 'twill make me speak; speak mine own curse. I am enveloped in a toil of misery through which I cannot struggle. No, do not curse me! Let some prompt hand lay bare this heart before you, 'twill throb indeed with agony, but spotless as your mountain snow!

Jerome. Like mine—mine now, become your bosom!

'tis all the blow I hurl upon yon. Yet fly, fly far from this abode--distant as the remotest star beyond us---for ever, ever!

Hortense. Friends! Companions! Jerome! Lisette! Lindorf, this Lindorf --- hear me; he! he! Lindorf, I mean --- (*looks towards ALBERT.*) Albert, I had forgot ---there is one heart, at least, that knows me; there is one hand that will not spurn me.

GROUP.

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Front Landscape.

LINDORF and MARTIN. BRENT at a distance.

Lindorf. These are fair tidings, Martin. Hortense, a willing exile ! Why, this will be, to wash the base coin I play with, in the golden chance her gallant spirit lends me, and the very virtues of the maid supply me weapons to her own defeat. Is that Brent with you ?

Martin. The same.

Lindorf. You have doubtless heard that Hortense quits St. Martin this very evening. I have learned, moreover, her immediate purpose is to reach the town of Cluse. A guide being necessary, him, my vigilance procured—a prompt and hearty friend of mine. The course will then be easy ; for, Martin, whilst Hortense survives, I cannot, dare not rest.

Martin. I fear it is too true. What, therefore, is the course you meditate ?

Lindorf. You shall know all. Come hither, honest Brent. Are you still tenant of the osier cottage, down by the Wizard's rock ?

Brent. Aye, noble Sir, and on my conscience hav'n't shot one of the convent bucks these six weeks.

Lindorf. Indeed ! Why you'll go nigh to starve on this reform. But, hark ye. You can be of some trifling service to me. I have this night occasion to travel through the forest, on a report of renewed hostilities on the frontier ; and it may be opportune to tarry perhaps till morning under your roof. Here—spend the night, my friend as you may list, and give me the key of your little dwelling. (*gives money.*)

Brent. With all my will. But as I starve on reformation, Captain, you'll find but the meagre signs of my honesty to sup on. Not a shrunk hamstring to be seen.

Lindorf. Shelter, probably for a few hours, to relieve my grooms, is all I ask. Come, the key!

(*Enter ANTOINE behind, dejectedly; starts on observing LINDORF; retires apart.*)

Brent. Here it is, Captain. But since we speak on't, should, peradventure, your excellency trace the faint shadow of a neck or quarter, be mindful, I have a character to lose.

Lindorf. Just so—a living to get. I'll not betray you.

Brent. So speed your charitable honour! (*Exit.*)

Antoine. (apart.) Brent to have given the key of his cottage to Lindorf. There is something on the wing that will make even Wizard's Rock shudder. Suspicion urges me to track them. (*Retires*).

Lindorf. All now's secure. The priest cannot, himself, accompany Hortense; her only guide, therefore, will be my trusty friend. Under cover of conducting her the nearest route to Cluse, she will be betrayed at Brent's sequestered hut. I have another stout heart there will join them. Thou know'st the Hungarian owes me a service?

Martin. Have you no apprehensions, Sir?

Lindorf. Everything is in my power. Do they not think her infamous? Quits she not St. Martin under the deep depression of her late sentence? Her sudden disappearance, then, will have all the colour of a voluntary and atoning exile.

Martin. Accomplish that, indeed, and all is safe.

Lindorf. What can oppose me? Not far above the rapids stands Brent's cottage. At the hour of midnight I shall await the coming of those I have in confidence. The burden which you will see them bear, once consigned to the trackless grave of waters, will give me life and freedom!

(*Exeunt.*)

(*BRENT returns, carelessly counting money.*)

Brent. Ah! hah! Why the Captain has been most bountiful. Still fifteen livres in hand! a tolerable rent for that family homestead of mine. By the mass! a very *petite maison*, and not unworthy the downy days of Louis XV. Captain! why he should have been a cardinal, at

least, to play the spendthrift with forty livres for a night's dalliance. But for us.

(*Chants.*)

'Tis our own land or wave,
And this world nature gave—
To the rover no borders are foreign.
He's at home ev'rywhere,
And with match, flint, and snare,
Why he scoffs at the lord, and free warren.

(*ANTOINE enters hastily.*)

Antoine. Ah ! is it you ? indeed you—Honest Brent ?

Brent. Honest Brent ! Here's another of 'em. Now will this fellow treat me for a rogue, for honest Brent is incontinently challenged to some knavish work.

Antoine. Not so—believe me, not so. Hark ye ! I know to whose service your cottage yonder has been given up ; and St. Peter forfend you should have known the purpose.

Brent. No ; but even now, I made a parlous guess, though no court losel, I.

Antoine. Hear me ! You are in the midst of danger. In a few hours you may be arrested on a charge for which your liberty—your life—might answer. I entreat you, I command you, listen to me. Have you arms ? What, and where ? tell me instantly.

Brent. Arms ! why, what's this ? You see I have none—not even my rifle.

Antoine. Then we must act without them. Tell me at once, Brent, would you engage in a cause which is really honest—to rescue a betrayed and guileless woman from wolfish hands, seeking her blood, but now—and that, under your roof ?

Brent. Under my roof ! How ! What, the hut ?

Antoine. The same, the same. Ah ! I see thou wilt be faithful. Thou wilt—thou wilt.

Brent. Blood ! human blood, did I hear ?

Antoine. Aye, indeed. Or if not human, still more pure.

Brent. Eh ? Think you then to press one drop of the true wine, integrity, from the shrunk lees of a poacher's conscience ? St. Dominic, it flows already !

(*Shakes him by the hand.*)

Antoine. Fly we, then !

Brent. To spring the game. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

Interior of BRENT'S Cottage, in a sequestered spot.

Hungarian A plaguy long time is Tracato with this same petticoat. In sooth, fair wages—else taking a young thing's life at cold midnight, is an act which tries a friend! Here's a cottage as black as thunder, and as hollow as a fishing smack, keel starwards. She's not to die till midnight. Night draws rarely on, so I'll shut up all safe—(*closes window shutters*), and kindle a bit of a fire within this human sty—(*strikes a light.*) Tracato dares not palter with his trust—still, would it were over! Never was in such a business but twice before, in my days, so it can't be said I've any natural taking to the trade—(*knock.*) Hah! ha! they come—(*opens the door*—TRACATO enters with HORTENSE.)

Hortense. I'm sacrificed!—betrayed!

Hung. Hah! welcome, at last! Why, I had my misgivings of passing but a churlish night in the forest, and alone, you see, my nerves became as fanciful as a village girl's.

Tracato. 'Twas dark—'twas dark.

Hung. Dark! why didn't you put a light in those lantern cheeks—you'd 'a seen a league off—(*chuckles.*) What, cockatrice, isn't there a single Christian wench can withstand that strange fascination, but all must be dodging you?—Blind! quotha! that there love's anything but blind, which could discover your beauty spots, sorry cut-throat!

Tracato. Hold mumming now.

Hortense. Alas! how I tremble!—(*Endeavouring to conceal her fears.*) 'Tis the chill of evening, I dare vouch.

Hung. Well—come! We'll warm you—you shall sit between us.

(*Whispers to TRACATO, and points towards the hills, as though giving him instruction. Exit. TRACATO.*)

Hortense. (*apart.*) Pyronne! Pyronne! Have I for this preserved thee? for this, maintained that hasty pledge inviolable? (*to him.*) Tell me at once your terrible intent, for beyond all hope I am your victim?

Hung. Here's gratitude for a night's lodging. True,

our hangings are not costly, and we haven't many spare beds, but we can accommodate a friend on a nice occasion.

Hortense. Ah ! do not bend those withering brows upon me. But save, oh ! save me. Absolve an age of guilt by one great action of humanity.

Hung. Why ! what viragoes these women are ! But come—we'll have no argufying—not we.

Hortense. No help is left me then, but only heaven !

Hung. Bravely said ! that's talking worthy the proud hearts which cherished you. By St. Francis, a trim wench !—yet she must die.—(*Seats himself at the table with the keg, &c.*) Now, what's your soldier's courage ? a commodity to be found in ev'ry village—what—courage, under sense of blows ?—a trick of turning, which belongs to a worm—but, there, there !—(*pointing his finger towards HORTENSE*)—pick me a whimpering grenadier who will do our work—aye—and in a workmanlike manner—that's the courage of a man, not boys.

Hortense. My fortitude is gone ; my blood chills with horror.—(*Sinks on a mean pallet.*)

Hung. Midnight's the hour of business—so she'll see the day well out—and how many millions breathing at this moment cannot say as much.—(*Drinks.*) Wouldn't it be a bit sociable to ask this limed twitterer to drug her valour ? (*offers the horn.*) Soh ! sweet, lamb, put this to your lips ; you needn't blench ; we won't do the business *that* way—come, drink.

Hortense. (*Assuming confidence.*) No, gentleman, no, I fear not that ; there's yet compassion in you. I drink, you see, and prove you.—(*Drinks.*) I must prepare to die, then. Into thy hands, Providence, who art ever watchful, ever just, do I commit my spirit. Now let me be calm—the door, the door, alas ! now fast !

Hung. By Beelzebub, the god of love, 'tis a pretty bird, and some strange folk might say, 'tis a pity she should die, (*surveying her.*)

Hortense. (*Eagerly.*)—"Tis a sin ! 'tis a sin !

Hung. Ah ! that's Arabic. She's quite a picture. Hark ye, I've a weak, foud nature about me, which certainly will, some day, be my ruin. What, if I look over all that's past 'twixt you and the Captain, and make an honest woman of you ?

Hortense. How !

Hung. No young woman need be ashamed of me in the clothes I've got at home—and I've laid up something for a family—(*whispers close*); think of death, my life!

Hortense. I will meet it.

Hung. Oh! you shall be indulged; (*examines the hovel—takes out pistol and knife.*) This little fellow can speak for himself, when put to't; and here's as tough a bit of vixen stuff as any in Savoy.—(*Seats himself—pulls out a piece of paper, with which he is about to light his pipe.*) What's this?—a piece of larning, which I picked up in the market-place; let's see—(*reads.*)—"Avis." Ah! fortune has still a leer for me, I see.—"Wanted, a steady young person to attend a sick elderly lady on easy journeys; no followers, and must have had the small pox;"—why, we were made for one another.—(*Noise. ANTOINE and BRENT shove open the window above, to which they have climbed outside. HORTENSE alone observes them.*) Ugh! this old hovel, like a crazy crone—it gives at ev'ry blast.

Hortense. Soft! the window! that could have been no enemy. Still will I cling to life.

Hung. How now, linnet?—Confession! eh? Shrove-tide doesn't fall in these parts. If you would live your hour out—

Hor. I will do anything you please. I take the horn again; Sir, to your guileless family.

Hung. Ha! ha! old Madge—dumb soul—one dam, and seven on us—all alike!

Hortense. (*Looking towards the window.*) See, he motions me again—(*aside*)—something he means, which, alas! I cannot understand.

Hung. Hark! I thought I heard the distant chime of midnight.

Hortense (*starting forward*) Nay—nay—do not mock me in the very hour of death. I have still a long, long interval of life. You will not, cannot deny that. (*Aside*) Again he throws me signs. What shall I contrive? Closer, if I can—closer let me observe him. Hah! Antoine! Antoine! (*identifying him for the first time.*)

Hungarian. To the couch; to the couch. Another stoop, or the time will outrun our liquor.

Hortense (*looking towards the window*) 'Tis something he would give me. (*ANTOINE holds a small key in his hand.*) Courage! courage! Hortense! the instant is

precious—'tis for thy preservation, girl! (*looking towards the Hungarian*) he seems closely occupied—observes me not. Come, giant hope, fight for me now! I see—yes—yes—I mark you, lads (*She creeps by degrees under the window. ANTOINE drops a key into her apron, on catching which she utters a half stifled scream—a general gaze of surprise. Both characters remain fixed for some moments.*) What is't? what is't? for I have it safe: 'tis a key—a key of curious fashion. Where to be used? the door? No, no—impossible!—how, how to be applied is this? Ah! I shall yet perish, and the means of safety in my grasp. Where! where? he points this way—to the floor!

Hungarian (still smoking) “And must have had the small-pox;” would she would sob into a dose. To bed, wench, to bed.

Hortense. I will, I will; let me calm. Yes, 'tis the floor he means. (*Pauses as though thinking.*) I have heard of hovels such as this, the smuggler's haunt, being so constructed to afford sudden concealment of the person; escape, too, from detection or pursuit—and such is this!—yes, yes, Antoine I'm patient now—patient and collected.

Hungarian. Pish! is that the Demoiselle, or the rats? Come! come! to sleep, I say. This is a steady house, and the sheets well aired. I'm somewhat particular myself.

Hortense. One word—on my knees—one word. You cannot, cannot surely deny me a few moments for prayer.

Hungarian. Till the clock strikes.

Hortense. (aside) Now or my opportunity is lost let me observe him. (*She eagerly notices ANTOINE as he speaks to her by signs. She repeats what he intends to express, viz.*) “The key” “spring trap” “descends”

“leads to the river side.” I understand him! I shall live! I shall live!

Hungarian (starting round) Hollo!

Hortense (dexterously recovering herself) In heaven! (*aside*) How shall I discover the door he tells me of? the spring, too? The dreadful midnight chime may yet o'er-take me. 'Tis my last, last moment. Do not withhold all show of mercy. I carry in my bosom a small missal; a parent's holy bequest. Lend me your light to trace the holy words of adoration and repentance.

Hungarian. (gives her the lantern) Aye! you can twist and mould me as you please. (*Drinks*) A little more

moisture. I'm like the camels,—make the most of it while I can get it.

Hortense (aside) He points again this way; to the centre of the room. (*She feigns to read, but looks anxiously for the spring on the floor.*) Here! here! thank God 'tis here! (*to him*) Yes, I am nearly now prepared; (*creeps to the trap upon her knees*) he tells me I am right. The spring! and now I seem to press it—hoh! (*distant clock strikes twelve.*)

Hungarian. 'Tis midnight! (*claspings his blade.*)

Hortense. A moment! moment! (*Whilst on her knees, she touches a spring on the floor; trap opens, through which she sinks.* ANTOINE and BRENT then jump from the window on the stage. HUNGARIAN rushes towards the former with his knife, who, seizing the pistol, fires, and HUNGARIAN falls. BRENT unbars the door; he and ANTOINE fly. HUNGARIAN weltering in blood, attempts to find the spring on the floor, exhausted, dies. Scene closes.)

SCENE III.

Narrow defile of mountains. Night time. Shores of the river Arve. Cavern in foreground. LINDORF and MARTIN.

Lindorf. This is the road; well do I know the mazy windings of these rocks. We are right, good Martin. Our path will presently become more open; yet haply is it as pitchy as we could desire. This to the right leads to the abyss of waters.

Martin. Hark! what noise was that?

Lindorf. 'Tis the great condor's shriek winging his solitary flight amid yon precipices.

Martin. Let us pause no longer. Lead towards the river.

Lindorf. Follow, then; the next descent, and we shall meet our friends. The Hungarian knows me, and will be faithful. (*A strain of music.*)

Martin. The chimes are over, and midnight past. What intelligence has reached you?

Lindorf. Return of the priest to the village, and

Tracato, I am well aware, took due charge of Hortense. From off yon promontory, into the breaking depth, the corse will be precipitated; a spot which footstep has scarce ever trod; a depth which human eye hath never dared to fathom! Hark! (*Music is heard at a distance.*)

Martin. 'Tis a distant chorus. Some nightly bark is floating to Chatillon.

Lindorf. Soh! Retire we for a time. Breathless our silence. (*LINDORF and MARTIN move off at the side scene; the chorus becomes clearer; a small vessel moves down the stream with lights*)

CHORUS.

When the night winds sweep
O'er the rippling deep,
We cheerily banish repose and sleep—
When townsmen snore,
Our floating store
We warily guard from the rock and shore!

(*After the vessel has passed on; a pause. The rock suddenly gives way. HORTENSE appears from the interior of the cavern. She looks wildly around.*)

Hortense. (*confused*) Hah! have mercy, mercy! By your hopes hereafter, do not execute your cruel purpose! (*Partly recovering her recollection*) What's this? where am I? 'Tis the moist, open sky! Have I escaped them, then? Oh! what is it I have passed? these hands are free, and I seem to breathe free air. No! no! they yet glare on me with their savage eyes. Forbear! forbear! one moment longer; 'twas not the clock which sounded. (*Pause.*) Still free! Do they relent, then? No, no! that cannot be. *Pyronne* could ne'er relent. Guilty, guilty, and inhuman! (*Pause*) What moisture's this? 'tis the dew of heaven! (*recovering her recollection*) gently distilling on this throbbing pulse. The cavern, too! kind, generous *Antoine*! Yes, yes, his tale was true; his aid propitious; my poor brain's bewildered. This was no magic spell, but human benevolence, and I am safe, safe, sa— (*falls exhausted.*)

Antoine. (*Behind.*) Return, return, good Brent, to the hut; let me search out Hortense.—(*Enters.*) Where, where

is she? Hortense! Hortense! An entrance leads to these parts, by Brent's account; which—(*sees her on the ground.*) Ah! Hortense! suffering! sacrificed! Look up, look up, dear maid; 'tis Antoine; thine and Lisette's; thou art safe, safe indeed!

Hortense. (*Still bewildered.*) Unbind me, quick! Why lacerate me thus? Spare! oh! spare me, Lindorf! See, see! thine hand still reeks with slaughter. Yet 'tis not *my* blood—no—no—blood purer than this heart's!

Antoine. What can she mean? Speak—speak again, Hortense. What blood?

Hortense. Forbear! forbear! The girl shall be thine! Yes, you shall call her wife—(*pause.*) What have I said? *Thy* wife! *Py* —! No—no! *here* is thy victim, first. Plunge deeply *here* thy weapon—strike, strike! for here, in preservation of that innocent I'll kneel, nor shun thy fury.—(*faints again.*)

Antoine. Oh! that this mind may yet be saved, for thy great purpose, justice!—Who's there?—(*covering HORTENSE and his own features with the cloak.*)

Lindorf. (*Entering.*) Speak! speak! is't done?—(*mistaking ANTOINE for TRACATO, with the dead body of HORTENSE.*) Hah! do I behold it so? my hope accomplished? Tell me—tell me I am safe. Proclaim that I have triumphed! Speak, good Tracato, the welcome word.

Antoine. (*aside.*) Can this be *man*? conscious, accounting *man*?—(*to him.*) Hush! we may yet be discovered. Be satisfied. Behold, how faithfully we have accomplished all.

Lindorf. The corse!—the corse!—Welcome the chance! Thou art indeed faithful—hold! Where is thy fellow?—Where the Hungarian?

Antoine. He will be here anon. For safety's sake, retire. We'll bring the tidings to thy home at nightfall. The day breaks—away, sir—away!

Lindorf. The gulf! the gulf! good Tracato. Into the deepest abyss of waters, let all my fears, my hate, be buried! To yon high promontory, you and your fellow, bear the body;—thence hurl it headlong, that the loud torrent in its unpausing rage may howl over the powerless Hortense!

Antoine. It shall be so!—Hist! footfalls! Some one approaches. Begone!—begone!

Lindorf. A Spanish galleon shall not outweigh thy recompense. Meet me in three hours, within half a league of Cluse, (*pause*). Guilty! but *safe*, Pyronne! Guilty! yet *spotless* before men! (*Exit.*)

Antoine. He's gone!—he's gone!

Brent. (*as he enters*) Antoine! ho! ho! hollo!

Antoine. Eh? 'tis Brent's voice! Grateful, indeed! Hist! Brent, brave boy; support Hortense. Here in this cloak—gently!—hush!

Brent. (*assisting*) Alas! alas!

Antoine. Hush! utter nothing, but be active! we have yet more perils to encounter. Gently; gently; This way; this is the path; but beware, not a word. There, there now; that's bravely done—well, well, my lad.

(*They enfold HORTENSE in the cloak, and bear her up the pathway amidst the rocks. Music. Scene closes.*)

SCENE IV

The neighbourhood of the Farm.

PROPHETIC enters, followed by BABET angrily.

Prophetic. Mr. Lindorf, in sooth; that was the fellow who was to take me in tow. No, no! I tell you. 'Tis all at an end, all over.

Babet. You can't mean it; you can't mean it, Mr. Prophetic. What, are we all to be turned to the right-about, making monsters of yourselves and fools of us, because Mademoiselle Hortense, forsooth, has proved herself such a tartar? I do not deserve this treatment:

Prophetic. I know it; but as I love to be liberal, I bestow on you more than you merit; but go. You are each but a specimen of a most foul species.

Babet. Were we not to have been married in the nutting season? and now what's to be done, I should like to know? Two quilts, a dozen diapers, besides six new French cambric handkerchiefs, marked with a great P, for the occasion. B. P., Babet Prophetic. My next offer may not be a P.; could I have foreseen it ———

Prophetic. ——— foreseen! Let no one talk of foreseeing

again. No, no. The saints be praised, I am safe and single! Who would have thought it? Hortense, whom we all deemed such a pattern and so well behaved. Could *you* have foreseen her cunning, I say? No; though you had the vigilance of the lynx, and as many eyes in your tail as a peacock.

Babet. Mark you, this? roisterer! And how easily alarmed, too! But I verily believe, most ignoble dealer in slops, that this abhorrence of Mademoiselle Hortense and her elopement, is but a fetch and contrivance to get rid of your contract with me; and, like all general lovers, you are just looking out for a timely change.

Prophetic. Or rather as a general merchant, my profession is to be seen upon 'change.

Babet. Why, he'd turn a serious courtship into a mere country dance. Hands across; change partners; down the middle, I warrant ye; aye! and back again!

Prophetic. Truly; and a blind fiddler, the only Cupid of the ceremony.

Babet. Have you not sworn your happiness depends on me?

Prophetic. And so it does; for if you would keep but a little at a distance, I should be the happiest of mortals.—Women, I begin to fancy, are like the dry-rot, when you once get them into a house they overrun all the building.

Babet. Monstrous!—and twists the whole affair into a pitiful gibe! Hark ye, Mr. Prophetic. Take care how you provoke me. I believe my kinsman, the exciseman, has not paid your shop a visit lately. Take care how you provoke me, I say.

Prophetic. Nonsense! I'd rather *pay* duty to the state of Savoy, than owe it to the state of matrimony. So, come! (*Kisses her,*) there's a deed of separation; and for all that remains, you know, they are only such dilemmas which a few moons may get over and a few summers obliterate; so all good people who make up their minds to live single, I foresee will not be coupled with such wives as our paragon, Hortense. My mind is stoutly made up never to marry.

Babet. (*walking up to him, pertly.*) And I'll be bound you are right; for, like a dutiful son, they *do* say, you will be but following the example of the late Mr. Prophetic, senior, your honoured father. (*Curtseying.*)

Prophetic. Babet ! Babet !

Babet. (*laughing.*) You see what it is to play with edged tools. And now I'll leave you to finish your oration to the recompense of your own applause. Farewell, Mr. Prophetic, the general dealer! though, he little guesses how frequently he is known by the appellation of the Pedlar—his affections no more fixed than his habitation.

(*Exit.*)

Prophetic. Why, this is what I call an escape—and a lucky escape. Now, this *is* fortunate ! And such is the reason, I suppose, when a man is married, that we wish him joy. *Wish* it him, because he hasn't got it. Ha ! ha ! and now if I never live to be married, I foresee I may yet be buried a bachelor. *Toute femme est coquette*, as our French invaders say.

SCENE V.

(*The farm. LISETTE discovered sitting on one side of the stage, leaning on her father's neck. BABET standing on the other.*)

Babet. Poor, poor Lisette—unhappy Mr. Jerome. I begin to fancy, if love be not itself sinful, it points some measure in that direction ; for never do I dream of it, without thinking of a priest ! As to that Prophetic, what a lucky escape I have had ! and should the very best of them now protest that Babet was the comeliest she in the whole republic of the sex, with what delight would I expose the unblushing falsehood to the full conviction of every eye in St. Martin !

Jerome. (*to Lisette.*) Sad hour's ride, sorry steeds, and the green tracts of joy o'er which we sometime bound, show but as spots in the wider territory affliction sways.

Lisette My father ! I cannot, cannot think him base—Hortense alone—

Jerome. Hortense ! Lindorf, too ! the paramour and villain !—fled ! whither ? No doubt they understand each other. But for thyself, child, remember that a good conscience soars so airily, and hath its flight so nigh to heaven, the shaft of human malice reacheth it in vain !

Lisette (throwing her arms about him.) Oh ! chide no more my dearest father ; though torn from him I would have loved, the duties of a child to a fond parent will ever make me happy.

Babet. Alas, poor child ! I can feel for you, Mademoiselle Lisette, on the word of a slighted maid, I knew this Captain, but for a swaggerer at best. Descended from a noble line too, as he said—by my faith, not unlikely to be raised by the same means. Take my advice and listen.

(Sings.)

The goats were hale, the kine were sleek,
The cot lay hid 'neath Bernard peak,
The flocks secure within the pen,
And Marie was a very happy maiden, then.

A hunter he pursued his way,
With Alpine dog for Chamois prey,
He talked of love, like all the men,
And Marie was a very happy wife, just then !

But soon he caused her heart to ache,
She found she'd made a sad mistake,
He broke his neck in yonder glen,
And Marie was a very happy widow, then.

(Exit.)

(LINDORF presents himself behind, in an Austrian uniform).

Jerome and Lisette. (with astonishment.) Lindorf !

Lindorf. (Coming forward.) Aye ! thine, and Jerome's too. Lisette will hear me speak.

Lisette. We will, we will ; for his looks are joy, my father.

Jerome. Patient, child. Why then, proceed, Sir.

Lindorf. Jerome de Clotaire, listen to me. In Lausanne first we met—Hortense, this wild enthusiast, and myself. Her heart I sought not, yet her love was mine. Triumph, I would not, where I could not love. I left the city ; time passed away, and with it, as I hoped, this wayward passion of untutored years. Chance, and this day, brought us again together.

Lisette. Yes, Lindorf, yes ; go on !

Lindorf. Disguised, veiled, as thou know'st, she sought me secretly. From mine own lips demanded confirmation of my rumoured marriage with Lisette. I could not, did

not, hesitate to give it. With an impassioned grasp she held me, vowing by every holiest tie, not to outlive the hour that gave me to another. Seizing the occasion of renewed hostilities, without farewell, I fled this generous roof, and wrote, I know not what. They tell me she is gone—quitted you in shame and penitence. Hear me, then, Jerome: See me, Lisette, returned to her I love, the same unchanged, devoted Lindorf!

Lisette. Noble, generous man.

Jerome. Why then, my girl, even yet there may be joy.

Lindorf. By this embrace, Lindorf adores thee still.

(They go up the stage together.)

(PROPHETIC comes in with BABET.)

Prophetic. The saints! I foresaw well enough she was far too clever for us. Didn't I say now she was after no good this very morning?

Babet. So you did, as she followed you to the Sun Dial.

Jerome. Peace! Let the name be forgotten as the being is abhorred.

Prophetic. By the bye. Should she ever be brought to justice, think it right to say Paul Prophetic is the only advocate in St. Martin---that is---worth a fee---a very dab at verdicts, though they do say, like necessity, no law.

Jerome. Her conscience be her judge!

Prophetic. *In foro conscientia.* Ah! that's a court I don't practise in. May as well mention, though, opened a bit of a school for little urchins that can't be kept out of mischief at home. Six smart little fellows already; one for the birch every day in the week, letting the rod lie idle on the dominical. Reading, writing, casting accounts—keep a donkey too—one and carry six!

Jerome. Well, well; and I am happy to see you are likely to make up your differences here, too *(taking BABET's hand)*; he has given you his promise?

Babet. Ah! Sir, I'd rather he should *keep* it.

(curtseying.)

Prophetic. Yes, Sir, yes. We make up these things with our betters. The evaporation of lovers' sighs must condense into the solid drops of matrimony at last.

(Enter a Troop of Villagers, Music, &c.)

Jerome. Guardians of our coutry's soil, prosper your noble hearts!

(Shout, &c.)

Lindorf. (*Rising with LISETTE.*) And Lindorf secures at last, this gentle hand, which impious passion would have robbed him of.

Lisette. This hand?

Lindorf. Nay, then—this heart!—(*embracing her.*)

(*A great noise without—ANTOINE is heard to exclaim—*

Secure him!—on! on! to the farm—to Jerome! (*All on the stage are paralyzed.*)

Jerome. Have mercy, fate!

(*HORTENSE, ANTOINE, and others, rush in.*)

Hortense. Withhold! withhold! 'Tis I who bid you!
I, *Hortense!*

Lindorf. Despair! she lives! she lives!

Jerome. She raves! wretched Hortense! her brain is gone!

Hortense. No! no! but a heart, a brain, I save! save from intensest woe;—Pyronne! polluted—lost for ever!

Jerome. (*To ANTOINE.*) Support my child!—support my child!

Antoine. Lisette! upon this heart! faithful to the last!

Lindorf. (*After gazing in fixed horror on HORTENSE.*) She lives, yet guilt is no less clamorous in these ears! Nerve yet my sinews to record the deed Leave me not yet, great vengeance, nor despair, see my last purpose fail! Hortense, yet tremble!—(*striving to rush towards her, he is withheld—stands motionless for a while—gazing on HORTENSE.*) She shrinks not, nor retires! Speak to me, thou unfading form! one word, yet speak, lest from the grave this freezing sense approves thee!—speak!

Hortense (emphatically) D'Orville!

Pyronne. She lives, she breathes, to be again my scorn! Ye days of hazard, have ye spared me now to quail? and my arm withering drop before that heated breath, and this despised array? Take back the hollow vaunt, and let the trembling crowd mark one; hear me! Pyronne! the stained assassin of his kinsman! Pyronne, the baffled successor to his lands! who, to the common shame, stands here alive, your present terror, which denies you to advance a hair! (*A great noise, as of pursuit, &c. at the back of the stage. BRENT without exclaims*) Spare him no longer! (*A shot is heard; great consternation. At this moment TRACATO, wounded, presents himself at the crown of the*

bridge, and faintly shouts to LINDORF Now ! or they come ; to the hill ! the hill !

Lindorf. (looking towards him) Hah ! gallant heart ! could we but mock them yet ! *(seizes a cutlass, and rushes up the bridge)* on ! on ! *(TRACATO, being about to fly, is met by BRENT, who secures him. At the same moment, soldiers arrive on the bridge, and present their bayonets against LINDORF, as he is rushing up. He makes a desperate effort with his weapon, but retreats, exclaiming)* Hah ! alive ? I've sworn it ; never ! My fate is here ! *(throws himself from the bridge.)*

Hortense. Pyronne ! the Piedmontese !

Jerome. Oh ! horror ! horror !

Antoine. Lisette !

Lisette. Bless thee ! bless thee, Antoine *(throwing herself into his arms.)*

Hortense. (rushes forward in ecstasy ; embraces LISETTE and JEROME.) Jerome ! Lisette ! all will be happy yet !

Music. Group.

CURTAIN



